DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 242 012 EA 016 444

TITLE	Student Achievement Levels Raised at Chandler High School.
INSTITUTION	Northwest Regional Educational Lab., Portland, OR. Goal Based Education Program.
PUB DATE	Nov 83
NOTE	6p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055) -- Collected Works - Serials (022)
JOURNAL CIT	Profiles, Programs & Products; n35 Nov 1983
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Academic Achievement; *Academic Standards; Basic Skills; *Competency Based Education; *Discipline Policy; Educational Change; High Schools; Management by Objectives; Minimum Competencies; Models; Program Descriptions; *Program Effectiveness; School Community Relationship
IDENTIFIERS	*Goal Based Education; PF Project

ABSTRACT

Chandler (Arizona) High School has reported a dramatic increase in student achievement levels since implementing a number of management, curriculum, and discipline policy changes. Among the program changes that contributed to these gains are: (1) creation of a positive school environment, with high expectations for teachers, emphasis on high aspirations for students, a firm discipline policy, and a system to reward academic achievement; (2) districtwide implementation of a management by objectives (MBO) system, including district, school building, department, and individual teacher goals; (3) annual review of progress toward short- and long-range goals and objectives, including regular evaluations of teachers and administrators; (4) extensive curriculum revision, increased graduation requirements, and the institution of required minimum competencies; and (5) involvement of parents and other community members in the evaluation and review of school curriculum standards. In summary, careful planning, goal based management, extensive curriculum revision, and the adoption of a schoolwide discipline and academic reward system have all contributed to higher student achievement at Chandler High School. (LH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED242012

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☑ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

M. Margaret Rogers

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS RAISED AT CHANDLER HIGH SCHOOL

November 1983

EA 016 441

Northwest Regional Educational Lab.
Goal Based Education Program
Portland, Oregon

Profiles, Programs & Products
Number 35, November 1983

Profiles
programs & products

Student Achievement Levels Raised at Chandler High School

Institution of goal based educational management, extensive curriculum revision and the adoption of a schoolwide discipline and academic reward system have led to dramatic changes in student achievement levels at Chandler High School since 1976. Located near Phoenix in Chandler, Arizona, the school serves 1,500 students in grades 10 through 12 and is the one high school in the Chandler Unified School District No. 80.

The Chandler community is rapidly growing, changing from an agricultural to electronics industry economic base. A projected 100 percent population increase is expected in Chandler in the next three to four years. Chandler students are highly diverse in socioeconomic background, and the student body includes a 29 percent minority population, with 22 percent Hispanic students.

In the 1970s, Chandler was characterized by low student test scores, high incidence of vandalism and significant problems with student absenteeism and discipline. With changes in district operations and school level programs, there has been a complete turnaround at the school.

In the 1975-76 school year, the top 25 percent of the senior class scored in the 43rd percentile on the American College Test (ACT) college entrance exam. In 1982-83, that same group of seniors scored above the 88th percentile on the ACT. Chandler now has the highest ACT composite mean score of any public secondary school in Arizona.

Several elements contributed to the changes at Chandler:

- Creation of a positive school environment with high expectations for teachers, emphasis on high aspirations for students, a firm discipline policy and a system to reward academic achievement
- Districtwide implementation of a mangement by objectives system including district, school building, department and individual teacher goals
- Annual review of progress toward short- and long-range goals and objectives, including regular evaluations of teachers and administrators
- Extensive curriculum revision, increased graduation requirements and the institution of required minimum competencies
- Involvement of parents and other community members in the evaluation and review of school curriculum standards

Discipline First Priority

Improvements at Chandler High School began in 1976 with the arrival of Principal Howard Conley. With strong support from the district superintendent and board, Dr. Conley's first priority was to establish an organized, safe campus: students could not be expected to learn in an unruly and unpleasant school environment.

Three rules were instituted and enforced: no smoking, no drugs or alcohol and no violence. Students unable to conform to the rules were removed from the campus, as were all non-students who had customarily spent time on school grounds.

To demonstrate to the board, faculty, parents and the community the areas requiring improvement at Chandler, Dr. Conley collected a data base profiling the existing situation in the school:

- Student test scores were low on standardized achievement tests of basic skills
- Absenteeism was high, many students dropped out, and school buildings received about $10,000 per year in damage due to vandalism
- The curriculum was "flat": with no progressively difficult required classes, students could move through the three years and graduate from Chandler without increasing subject area skill levels
- Teacher expectations of students were very low, and student attitudes about the school were not very positive
- Graduation requirements did not assure that students would acquire minimum competencies in basic skill areas

Changes in management, curriculum and discipline have contributed to increased student achievement at Chandler High School.

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
300 S.W. Sixth Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97204

Goal Based Education
Number 35 November 1983

Much of that first year Principal Conley focused on discipline, teacher expectations and the community. As information was compiled, he met with many parents and community members to discuss school programs and expectations for students at Chandler. He also worked extensively with the teaching staff to begin the changes that would institute higher expectations for students from teachers at the school. The goal for Chandler was to establish high teacher expectations, high student aspirations and high parental/community involvement.

District Uses MBO System

Changes at Chandler have taken place through the use of a management by objectives (MBO) system adopted districtwide in the 1977-78 school year. Developed by Superintendent Dr. James T. Perry and Associate Superintendent Dr. Irvin Nikolai working with district principals and managers, the MBO system is the basis for planning and school improvement in the district. Part of the planning process included the districtwide climate study of the community and the schools which was completed in the spring of 1976.

Central to the MBO system is a five-year plan for school improvement which provides for considerable school autonomy. The plan includes broad goal statements of tasks and activities within a year-by-year timeline that will move the district toward continued improvement of curriculum, instruction and the support systems necessary for high quality schools. Goals in the initial five-year plan focused on increasing student achievement.

The goals represent direction and intent for ways to improve district schools. Each goal, at the appropriate time in the five-year period, is considered as to its feasibility related to resources and relevance to the district. The current five-year plan, the second drawn for the district, focuses on curriculum and instructional improvement. It includes task goals in Instruction and Instructional Support, Community Relations, Systems Development, Personnel, Purchasing, Food Services, Business Services and Physical Support Services. District schools all use the five-year plan as the basis for individual school improvement efforts.

At the conclusion of each school year, the five-year plan is examined in a two-step process to monitor progress toward completion. The first week after school is out, all district managers (principals, department heads, managers of food services, etc.) meet with central office administrators to examine the "state of the district." A thorough discussion and evaluation of progress toward meeting specified goals for the year just completed takes place, and goals for the coming year are specified.

The following week, school managers meet with their teachers for three days to assess individual school progress, identify current strengths and weaknesses, and set building goals and objectives for the following school year. These goals or "MBOs" become the school's "Management Guide" for the year and are forwarded to the district office for acceptance.

In start-up preservice sessions at the beginning of the new school year, departmental goals are set with contributions by all staff, and teachers set their own individual goals and objectives for the year. In this way, four levels of goals and objectives are set each year at Chandler High School and in all district schools.

The MBO approach provides a framework for planning, implementation and monitoring improvements at all district schools. During the post-school sessions in June/July 1981, for example, one Chandler High School goal was set to develop a study skills curriculum for sophomore students for implementation in the current 1983-84 school year. In a typical procedure, objectives were set to be completed during the 1982-83 school year: the completion of the curriculum, inservice for department teachers who would be teaching the study skills, and integration of the program into an existing course pending final board approval of the new curriculum. All objectives were completed, the goal was met, and the school is this year implementing the study skills curriculum for all incoming sophomores. During the June/July 1984 "state-of-the-school" discussions, the program will be evaluated and changes made to improve the curriculum as necessary.

Evaluation Tied to MBO Objectives

The overall Chandler High School MBO program is managed by an instructional management team comprised of the principal, two assistant principals and 13 department heads. This approach is designed to include a broad base of personnel in school-level decision making. The team meets weekly to discuss school programs and monitor progress toward school MBO objectives, and minutes of meetings are circulated to all staff. Department heads also lead regular departmental meetings to include all teachers in focused school efforts toward meeting current objectives.

The management team is responsible for ongoing observation and evaluation of Chandler teachers in terms of progress toward individual MBO goals and performance in the classroom. At least once per year, management team members complete unannounced classroom observations, immediately prepare written evaluations and arrange meetings with the teachers to discuss results. Evaluations note teacher strengths and make recommendations to help teachers reach individual MBO goals.

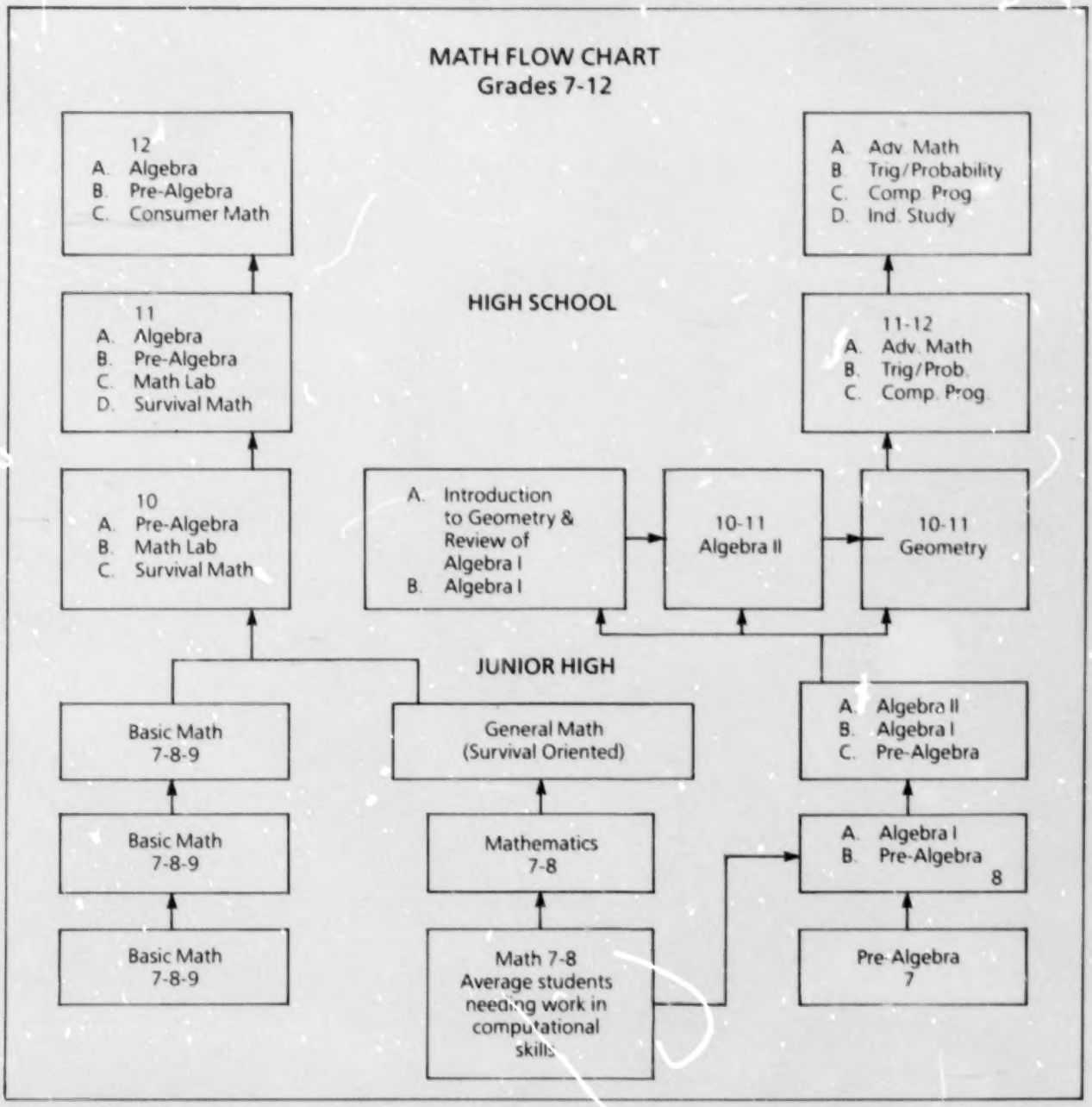
Once each year, teachers, in turn, evaluate administrators in an anonymous survey covering such items as accessibility to teachers, support, effectiveness in working with parents and others. Administrative evaluations are compiled by a committee of teachers, including the teachers' union representative, and presented to the principal, who then forwards results to the superintendent. Results are also circulated to department heads for report and discussion with all teachers in departmental meetings.

Through the establishment of *ad hoc* curriculum committees, parents and other community members are also involved in the evaluation of Chandler programs and cirriculum. Appointed by the principal, committees of seven to ten persons address current priorities at the school. Committee recommendations have been valuable in such areas as race relations, discipline and special education programs; and this year a committee is reviewing Chandler graduation requirements with the charge to reaffirm current standards or recommend specific changes in requirements.

Curriculum Revised

With a focus on increasing student achievement levels, the MBO aporoach has been used to make significant changes in the Chandler High School curriculum, in alignment with a districtwide curriculum articulated among elementary, junior high and high schools. Teachers have been highly involved in the curriculum revisions, which have been formally adopted by the Board of Education and fully implemented in the high school.

Graduation requirements at Chandler have been increased from 19 credits (one-half credit for each semester-long one-period class) to 22. Sixteen of the credits must be completed in grades 10 through 12, reducing the possibility of seniors "sliding through" the final year of high school with light course loads. Before receiving a diploma, all students must also demonstrate minimum competencies in reading, math, language arts, writing and survival skills (checkbooks, maps, tax returns, etc.) by scoring at prescribed levels on competency tests developed by the school and approved by the district.



The revised curriculum, articulated with the elementary and junior high programs, provides vertical structure for courses, such as this sample for mathematics.

In all subject areas, new vertical curriculum guides provide for students' skill advancement as they complete the necessary courses for graduation. According to entry level skills, students are placed in the appropriate level of the subject curriculum and expected to progress through the course sequence as they collect required credits. To complete the two-credit math requirement, for example, students must successfully pass four math courses. Depending on entry skills, students can reach the Algebra level by their senior year or can progress to Advanced Math, Trigonometry or Computer Programming.

Course descriptions have been developed by Chandler teachers for each of the approximately 200 courses offered at the school. Each description lists a general course objective and specifies objectives for student performance representing acceptable achievement of course objectives. Students are made aware of course objectives and teachers continually monitor student progress.

"Plans" Provide Levels of Instruction

To provide effective instruction for students at all skill levels, four "plans of study" are now offered at Chandler. Students must select one of the plans as they enter Chandler in grade 10 and must complete requirements within each plan as part of general high school graduation requirements.

The "General Plan" is designed for students who are preparing for general

employment immediately following graduation. These students must complete two credits of consumer-related studies in addition to regular graduation requirements.

The "College Prep Plan" requires that students complete an additional two years of math or science and a foreign language is strongly recommended. This plan is offered for students who will be enrolling in college with the goal of earning a four-year degree.

Students may follow the "Trade/Vocational Plan" which will lead to job entry skills, and are required to earn a total of four credits in courses offered in the vocational field of their choice. Course offerings include home economics, business, agriculture, industrial education and fine arts.

The "College Prep Honors Program" is new this year to Chandler, offering a more advanced program of study for students with higher skill development. The Honors Program combines Advanced Placement (AP) studies with the International Baccalaureate (IB) Program and is called "IB-AP." To complete the IB-AP program, students need to earn additional credits during their three years at Chandler. Extra honors classes are offered during "Zero Hour," an additional class period scheduled before the regular school day begins. To qualify for the program, students should be in the top ten percent of their class and have scored in the 95th percentile on nationally-normed tests.

Students in Advanced Placement courses can complete college-level studies in high school and can earn up to 30 college credit hours through high achievement on AP tests. The International Baccalaureate program is a comprehensive, cohesive program for academically talented and highly motivated students. The program is offered in only 100 high schools in the United States (no others in Arizona), and results in a diploma that is widely recognized by many colleges and universities, enabling students to gain admissions, course credit and advanced standing or placement. The integration of these two programs into the Chandler Honors Program provides a unique double opportunity for exceptional high school students to achieve college credits while completing high school requirements.

Special Needs Met

A strong remedial component is also included in the Chandler curriculum for students whose basic skills fall below district competency standards. Student progress is monitored in these remedial classes in the basic skills areas, and students who demonstrate sufficient improvement may move to General Plan classes at any time during the school year.

Two other programs have been developed at Chandler to provide continued educational opportunities for pregnant students and for those with children under five years old. The "Teenage Pregnancy Program in Basic Skills" is open to any school age girl who becomes pregnant and has not yet graduated from high school. Students in this program continue earning credits in all required subjects except lab science and physical education and are required to take a course in child development.

In the "Teenage Parenting Program," school age parents (mothers and fathers) continue with regular course work while their children are in a special day care facility on the school campus. These students are required to spend one class period in a parenting class and one other class period in the day care facility with their children, while the other four class periods are devoted to regular Chandler courses.

A registered nurse is on duty at the special facility, which houses both programs. The nurse provides individual health counseling, makes daily checkups of children before they enter the day care, and is available for resource guidance in child development and parenting. Extensive counseling is also available to students in both programs, which is offered through the school Home Economics Department to both married and unmarried students.

Academic Excellence High Priority

Academic excellence is emphasized for all students at Chandler. Teacher expectations are high, student aspirations are high, and parents are supportive of the school. A system of rewards for excellence has been instituted, supplementing the awarding of membership in National Honor Society with an Honors Letters program for students with high grades. Similar to those awarded in 18 competitive sports offered at the school, Chandler Honors Letters are awarded to students in the top five percent of their class who achieve a 3.75 or better grade point average.

Students are also rewarded for taking more challenging classes. The Chandler grade point average is determined in the standard formula, with "A" weighted as four points, "B" as three points, etc. In the computation of the GPA, however, grades are weighted according to the level of difficulty of the course. Students in regular courses receive, for example, four GPA points for each "A." In completing Honors Program courses, students receive one full bonus grade point: an "A" in an Honors course earns five GPA points instead of four. Similarly, grades in remedial courses are reduced a full grade point, and a student receiving an "A" in a remedial course earns three points toward the cumulative GPA. Courses are rated in difficulty in the student curriculum guide, and students are aware of the bonus system for each class they take.

A new Academic Banquet to be instituted this year will add to these incentives for high academic achievement. At the end of the school year, the parents will join students in the top ten percent of the senior class, and the top five percent of the sophomore and junior classes, at a special evening banquet to honor students for academic excellence.

Chandler High School emphasizes high student achievement, reflected in the school motto, "Let Each Student Aspire to Excellence." This year Chandler was recognized as an unusually successful secondary school in the "Excellence in Education" program by President Reagan and U.S. Secretary of Education Terrel Bell. By creation of a positive school environment, focusing on school improvement through the MBO system, and instituting high standards for students, the school has been successful in implementing major school improvements.

For further information, contact:

Dr. Howard Conley, Principal
Chandler High School
350 North Arizona Avenue
Chandler, Arizona 85224
602/963-4537